

Bureau of Land Management
Northwest California Resource Advisory Council

Field Tour and Business Meeting
Thursday and Friday, April 28-29, 2011
Ukiah, California

Summary Minutes

April 28

Members of the advisory council and a large group of interested members of the public participated in a field tour of the BLM Indian Valley Management Area which includes Walker Ridge. Discussion topics at various stop included management of off-highway vehicles, marijuana growing issues, plant species and a wind energy development proposed for Walker Ridge. About 50 people participated in the tour.

April 29

Opening Business

Attendance

Category one: Dennis Possehn, Bob Warren, Eric Lueder, Stan Leach.

Category two: Ryan Henson, Bob Schneider, Michael Kelley, Rondal Snodgrass.

Category three: Julie Rogers, Shirley Laos, Tony Shaw, Kendall Smith.

All members are present. There is a quorum.

BLM Staff attending: Northern California District Manager Nancy Haug, Central California District Manager Kathy Hardy, Ukiah Field Manager Rich Burns, Redding Field Manager Steve Anderson, Arcata Field Manager Lynda Roush, Ukiah Planning and Environmental Coordinator Jonna Hildenbrand, Northern California Public Affairs Officer Jeff Fontana, Central California Public Affairs Officer David Christy, Acting Deputy State Director for External Affairs Erin Curtis.

Opening Business

The agenda was approved with the addition of commendation letters for Jan Bedrosian, Steve Anderson and Bill Kuntz and Lynda Roush and Gary Pritchard-Peterson.

The members and managers welcomed new members Eric Lueder, Bob Schneider and Dennis Possehn.

The minutes from the July meeting were approved with these corrections: Stan Leach attended part of the meeting. Tony Shaw attended.

State Director, District Manager Reports

Northern California District Manager Nancy Haug thanked Rich and Jeff for the advance work on the field tour and the Ukiah staff for conducting the well attended tour.

Nancy summarized Acting State Director Jim Abbott's report:

- **Leadership Team in Washington/State Office:** Things pretty much unchanged regarding our leadership in Washington. Our Assistant Secretary for Lands and Minerals, Wilma Lewis, has been nominated to a Federal judgeship by the President and will be leaving Interior once confirmed. Jan Bedrosian, BLM-California's Deputy State Director for External Affairs, retired April 1. A search is underway for her replacement.
- **Budget:** President Obama signed into law a continuing resolution that keeps the federal government funded through the end of fiscal year 2011. A provision inserted in the CR defunds Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar's wild lands Order 3310 of Dec. 23, 2010, through September.
- **Legislation:** The 112th Congress is well underway. The primary focus of this Congress so far has been on budget issues. There are about half a dozen legislative proposals that we are tracking. A few that might be of interest to the RAC include:
 - H.R. 1581 by Congressman Kevin McCarthy – releases BLM wilderness study areas that are not suitable for wilderness designation and release U.S. Forest Service-inventoried roadless areas.
 - S. 138 by Senators Boxer & Feinstein establishes the Sacramento River National Recreation Area (Tehama & Shasta County) to be managed as part of the NLCS.
 - H.R. 1237 by Congressman Herger involves a land exchange between the BLM, Forest Service and Trinity Public Utilities District. BLM would acquire 47 acres, known as the Sky Ranch parcel.
- **Wild Horse & Burro** - We are in "adoption season" with the number of adoption events picking up throughout the state. In May we have the Extreme Mustang Trail Challenge in Norco, where people can bid on trail trained horses. In addition, we have horses and burros available at the corrals in Litchfield and Ridgecrest. Currently, we have no funded gathers in FY2011 in California. Our biggest priority for the state is the High Rock Complex in the Surprise FO. Depending on the results of the budget, we hope to gather this area in the fall. We would be removing about a thousand horses from the area and leaving about 230. BLM-California's successful Twin Peaks gather near Susanville last fall has become a Bureau-wide model for public participation and transparency.
- **BLM Priorities:** Renewable energy and America's Great Outdoors (including NLCS, youth initiatives and recreation) will be at the top of BLM-California's priority list for the remainder of the 2011 fiscal year.

- **State Director's Message** – Most of the pundits in Washington are predicting some tough times ahead as the President seeks ways to reduce the deficit while stimulating growth to generate jobs. BLM-California will share in both – we expect a lower budget in 2011 and 2012, and we will continue to work hard on siting renewable energy projects that generate jobs and produce American energy. These goals, plus our ongoing portfolio of multiple use programs and projects, will likely keep all of us busy in 2011. Both nationally and locally, the BLM raises more revenue each year for American taxpayers than it spends. In California, the BLM brings in \$600,000 in royalties from wind projects and \$12 million from geothermal projects each year. The six solar projects approved last year in the California desert could result in a combined total of nearly \$37 million in annual rent and royalties, once built out.

There was discussion about the Wild Lands Policy and the Congressional action to defund BLM action on it. Bob Schneider questioned whether the order to defund affects EISs underway where costs are reimbursed to the BLM. Managers noted that the agency is awaiting additional interpretation and direction from the Washington Office.

Action: Members asked for some future information on royalty funding and distribution from renewable energy projects, BLM budget history, including the LWCF. The RAC would like the information in two weeks. Tony wanted to see information on costs to BLM to address illegal uses of the public lands. The report will include some budget information on those expenditures.

Central California District: Central California District Manager Kathy Hardy updated the council on activities including planning at Bodie Hills and Alabama Hills, development of a new RMP for the Bakersfield Field Office, implementation of a management plan for the Carrizo Plain National Monument, improvements at the Piedras Blancas Lighthouse, projects and management at the San Joaquin River Gorge (including a possible visitor use fee), completion of a management plan at the Clear Creek OHV area near Hollister, proposed acquisitions in the San Benito Area to improve threatened and endangered species management, mine cleanup activities, river cleanup, and hazardous fuels reduction projects in the Mother Lode Field Office.

Northern California District: Nancy Haug reported that field offices are wrapping ARRA projects, addressing litigation associated with the Twin Peaks wild horse and burro roundup, planning for a fall wild horse roundup in the Surprise Field Office, and coordinating with the Winnemucca District in Nevada on management of wild horses and burros. The Surprise Field Office has been focused on environmental concerns associated with the development of the Ruby Natural Gas pipeline on some Nevada public lands. Field offices on the east side of the district are focused on grazing permit renewals wind energy proposals, and sage steppe restoration projects. Ken Collum is the new field manager for the Eagle Lake Field Office in Susanville; Allen Bollschweiler is the new field manager for the Surprise Field Office in Cedarville.

Walker Ridge

Chairman Michael Kelley noted that the RAC has not yet seen a proposal for the proposed wind energy project on the ridge between Colusa and Lake counties, and therefore there is no proposal upon which to comment. He suggested that the RAC needs to determine the most effective way for developing recommendations to the BLM once the draft EIS is released.

Ukiah Field Manager Rich Burns recapped the field trip and added several items:

- The draft EIS will present four alternatives, including a no action alternative. Proposed energy production will not exceed 70 megawatts in any alternative.
- Alternatives vary on numbers of turbines. These numbers are based on the energy output planned and turbine capacity. Depending on alternative, there would be 41, 29 or 24 300-foot tall turbines.
- There was significant public input during the issue scoping period for the draft EIS. There were concerns voiced about potential bat and bird mortality and road construction impacts.
- The field office works with 26 federally recognized tribes and has consulted with all of them regarding the Walker Ridge proposal. Four tribes have indicated high interest.
- The field office has yet to determine whether the Walker Ridge Road would be closed to the public during construction or how much impact a closure would have on people who visit Indian Valley Reservoir for recreation.

Bob Schneider suggested that an alternative should include analysis of environmental impacts to Baldy Peak. There was additional discussion about its significance for botanical, recreation and historical reasons.

There was discussion about turbine locations needed to capture the most wind and therefore make the project most economically viable.

Rich noted that while the wind energy proposal is a major undertaking, the BLM must still focus on management of other activities on Walker Ridge, which is part of the Indian Valley Management Area, including OHV use and combating illegal activities including marijuana growing.

In response to Rondal, Rich explained the project approval process: a core team of four staff members from across the BLM has participated in developing the draft EIS. Rich will sign the final decision but it will be made in concert with the state director, members of the project core team and staff members from the California state office.

The field office expects the draft EIS to be released for a 45-day public comment period by June 30, with a decision anticipated in November. Ecology and Environment is the company developing the EIS under contract to the BLM. The company has been responsible for collecting field data and developing reports as part of the EIS process. There is close cooperation with BLM field specialists.

Ryan Henson said the project proponent should fund various management activities and improvements should the project move forward.

Bob Schneider noted that the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) is asking that the entire Walker Ridge unit be considered as a BLM Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). He said the BLM needs to closely evaluate road work proposals to ensure there are no hydrologic impacts. He said the wind energy development proposal merits a 90-day public review because of its complexity. He said the additional time would enable the RAC to develop a more thorough recommendation.

Council Role in Walker Ridge DEIS

Members discussed the most efficient and effective way for the RAC to review and comment on the DEIS.

Kendall and Nancy stressed that the RAC needs to be careful to avoid using its email list as a tool for deliberation, stressing that discussion must be in a public forum.

There was discussion about meeting location and timing. Rondal said it will be most important for the RAC's decision space to be framed to facilitate effective discussion. Nancy suggested that the RAC should review all alternatives, commenting on what they support, what they don't and what they see as lacking.

Bob Schneider suggested that the comment period be extended and that the RAC meeting be moved to Sacramento in September.

Action: A vote on a motion to request a 90-day public comment period failed to achieve the required consensus. The motion failed.

The council agreed that the next meeting will be focused entirely on review and comment on the DEIS for the Walker Ridge project.

Sacramento River Bend

Redding Field Manager Steve Anderson explained that the field office is gearing up to develop a management plan for the 18,000-acre Sacramento River Bend ACEC. The work will proceed and involve the RAC regardless of what happens with legislative proposals to enact a special designation for the Bend area.

Bob Warren updated the RAC on the most recent Congressional actions related the proposal to designate the Bend as a National Recreation Area.

Public Comment

Victoria Brandon, Sierra Club: Is interested in the Walker Ridge proposal. She stressed that the BLM is faced with balancing the needs of various interests and arriving at a decision in the best public interest overall. She said the genuine value of the wind resource must be taken into consideration and balanced against the environmental impacts. She said that there has not been clear information about economic benefits for local communities. She was concerned that the RAC will be considering the DEIS without benefit of reviewing all public comment received by the BLM.

Vishnu, CNPS and Peregrine Audubon: Would prefer the project is not built because of environmental damage cause by road widening and construction. But if the project is to proceed, he suggested using a helicopter to bring in construction materials. Roads won't have to be so wide if the components are airlifted. Only construction equipment would use roads then.

Peter Warner, CNPS: Supports extending ACEC to include all of Walker Ridge. He said extending the comment period would ultimately save time and money in the process by heading off conflicts and challenges to the EIS. He supports at least 90 days. Road issues are primary concerns. The EIS should address cumulative, long term impacts of the project in relation to the relatively small contribution of wind energy to the state of California. Mitigation measures must include a long term, well-funded monitoring program. He cautioned that in his experience most mitigation measures fail. Monitoring is essential.

Sara Husbee, Tuleyome executive director: Updated the council on regional activities of the organization on trails, advocacy work on the proposed Berryessa-Snow Mountain National Conservation Area proposal, a youth outdoor experience program, mercury cleanup projects using grant funds, and supporting an ACEC designation for Walker Ridge.

Land Tenure Reports

Arcata

Lynda Roush summarized Arcata Field Office status:

FY 2010 Funding from Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

Acquisitions Completed:

Lighthouse Ranch – South Spit (\$535,000) - 2.06 acres - closed on Dec 22, 2010. This parcel complements the public land based continuity between the South Spit and the Eel River Wildlife Area.

Sierra Pacific Industries - Lacks Creek (\$275,000) - 160 acres - closed on September 24, 2010 (acquiring final title in the next week or so). This area provides recreational opportunities for the public through future mountain biking and hiking trails. Opportunities exist for oak woodland restoration and forest health projects.

Sanctuary Forest – King Range NCA (\$300,000) - 17 acres - Closed January 26, 2010. As an edge holding within the King Range National Conservation Area (NCA), this area will complement the overall land base of the NCA.

Henton – King Range (\$300,000) - 10 acres - Closed June 11, 2010. As an edge holding within the King Range National Conservation Area (NCA), this area will complement the overall land base of the NCA.

Acquisitions In Escrow and Closing:

Stormy Saddle – Lacks Creek (\$300,000) - 162 acres - estimated closing June 1, 2011. This area provides recreational opportunities for the public through future mountain biking and hiking trails. Opportunities exist for oak woodland restoration and forest health projects.

Renner/Etter/Buchanan – King Range NCA (\$425,000) - 40 acres - estimated closing June 1, 2011. A high priority acquisition as a west slope inholding within the King Range National Conservation Area (NCA), this area will complement the overall land base of the NCA.

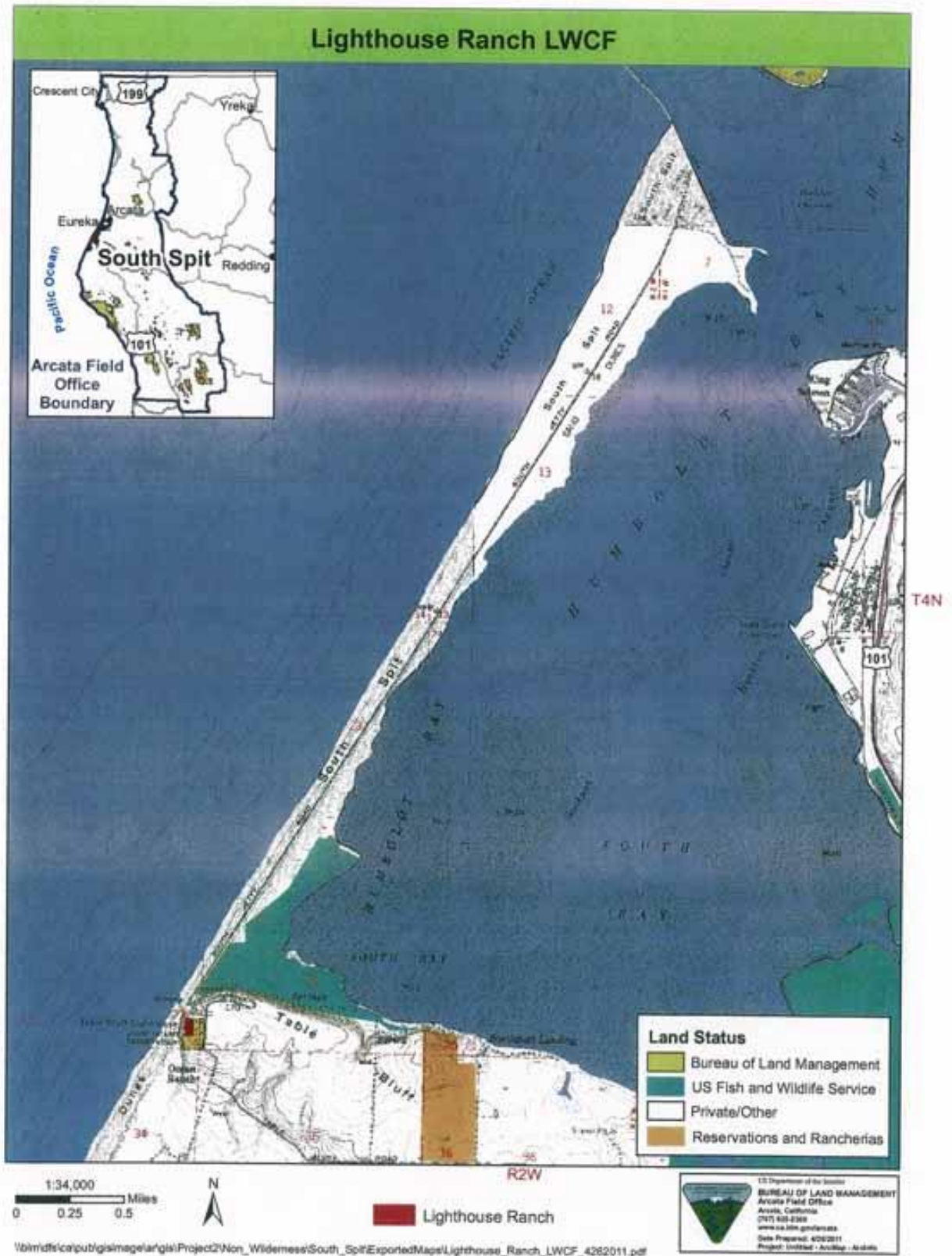
Fearrien – King Range NCA (\$430,000) - 320 acres - estimated closing June 1, 2011. As an edge holding within the King Range National Conservation Area (NCA), this area will complement the overall land base of the NCA.

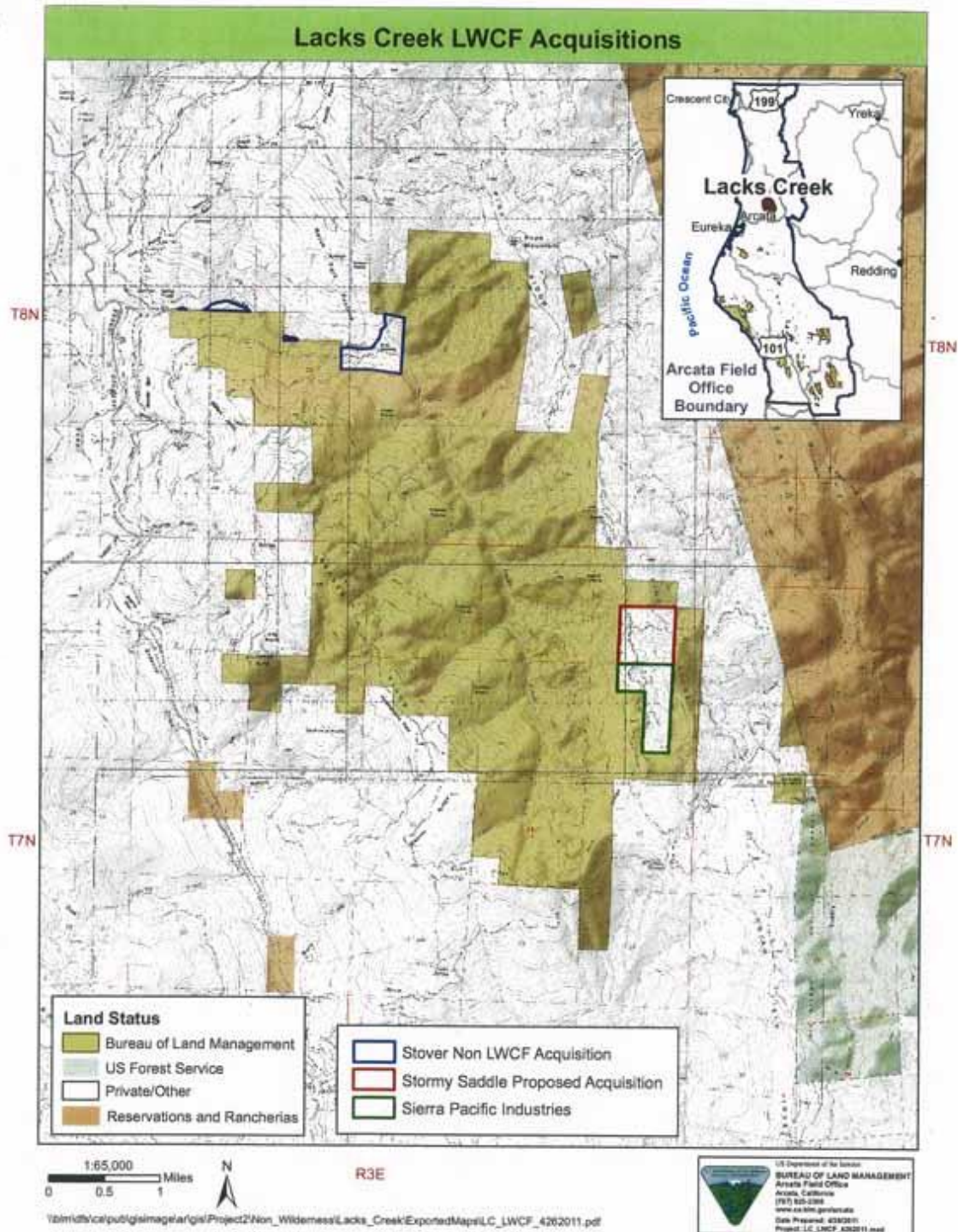
FY 2011 Non LWCF Acquisitions

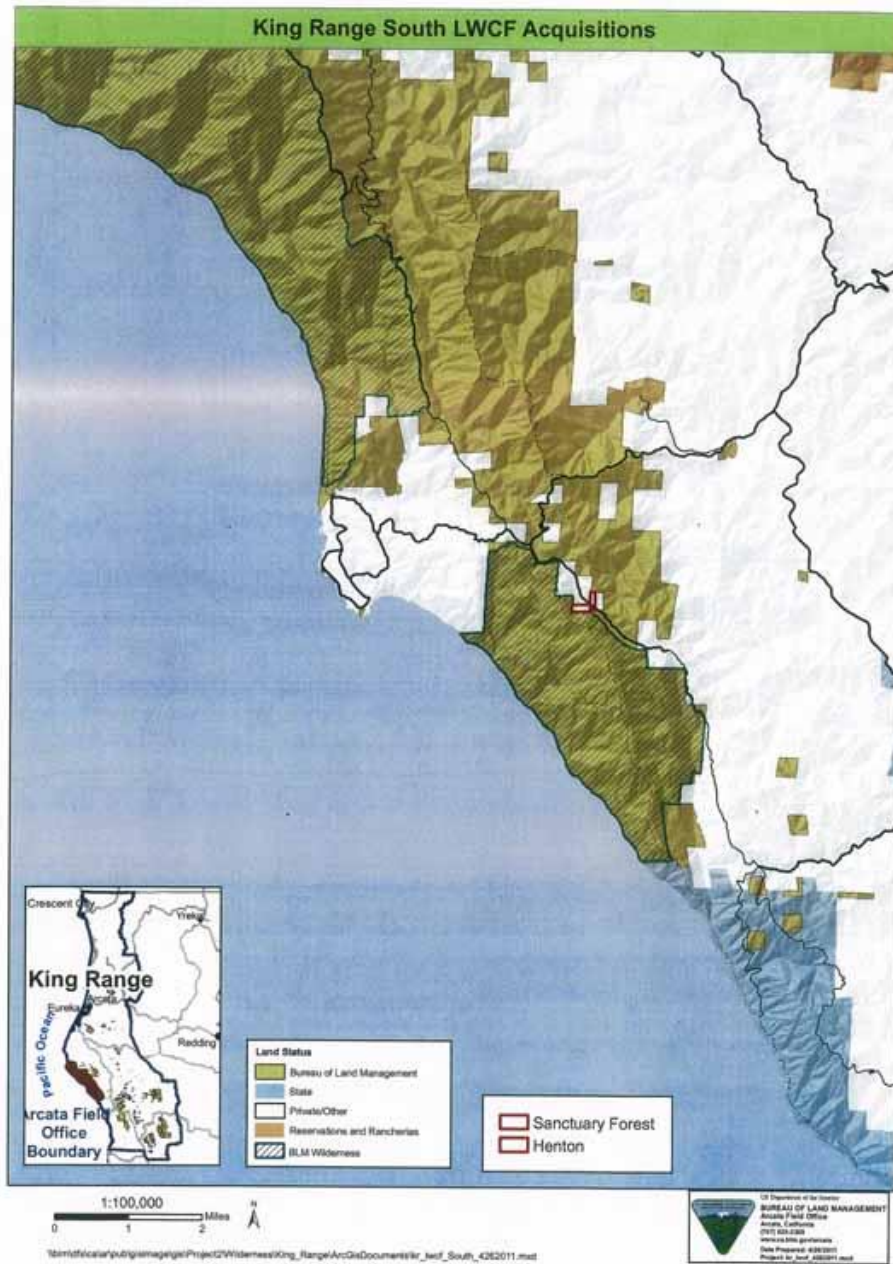
Stover Ranch Lot Line Adjustment – Lacks Creek (Donated by Save-the-Redwood League) - 124 acres - closed March 17, 2011. These lands provide both fisheries and water quality benefits and provide a sensible delineation between public and private lands.

FY 2011 Proposed LWCF Funding (We have not received this funding to date)

Red Mountain (\$1.6 million) - 600 acres in the South Fork Eel River Wilderness. These parcels will enhance public land wilderness as these private lands are within the South Fork Eel Wilderness boundary.







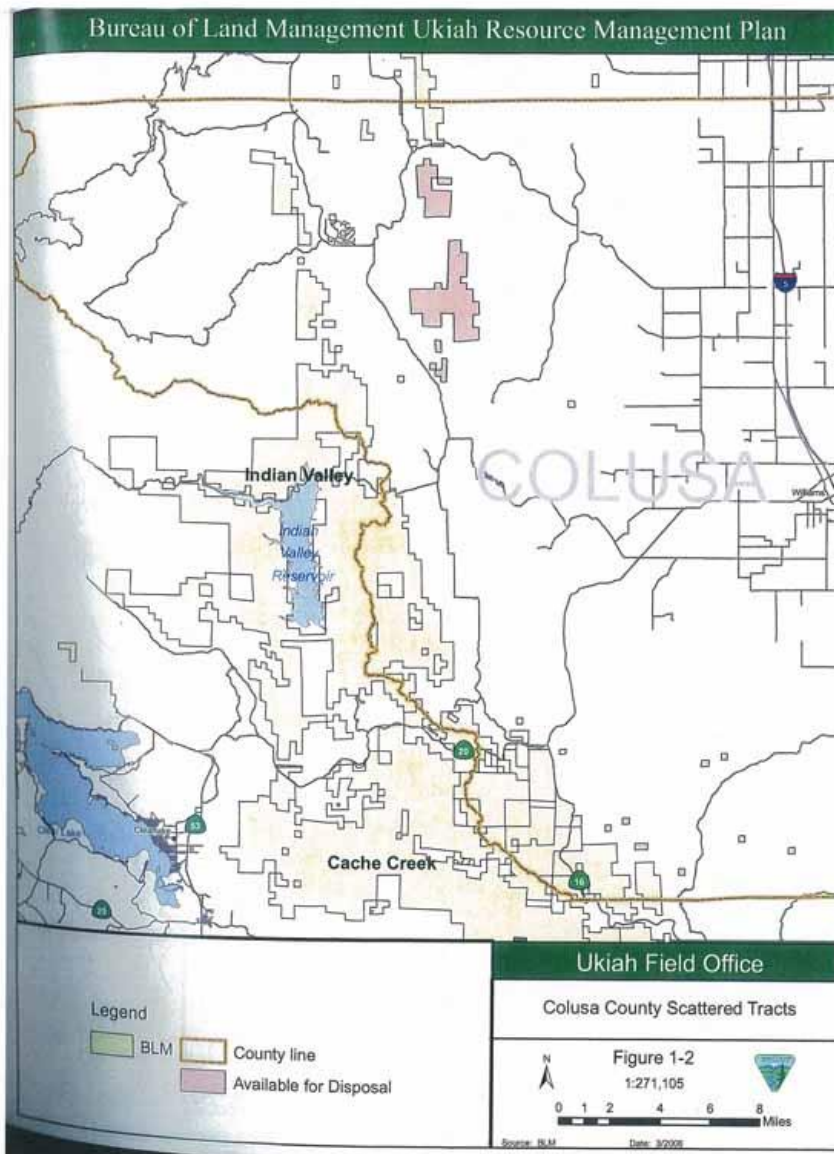
Redding

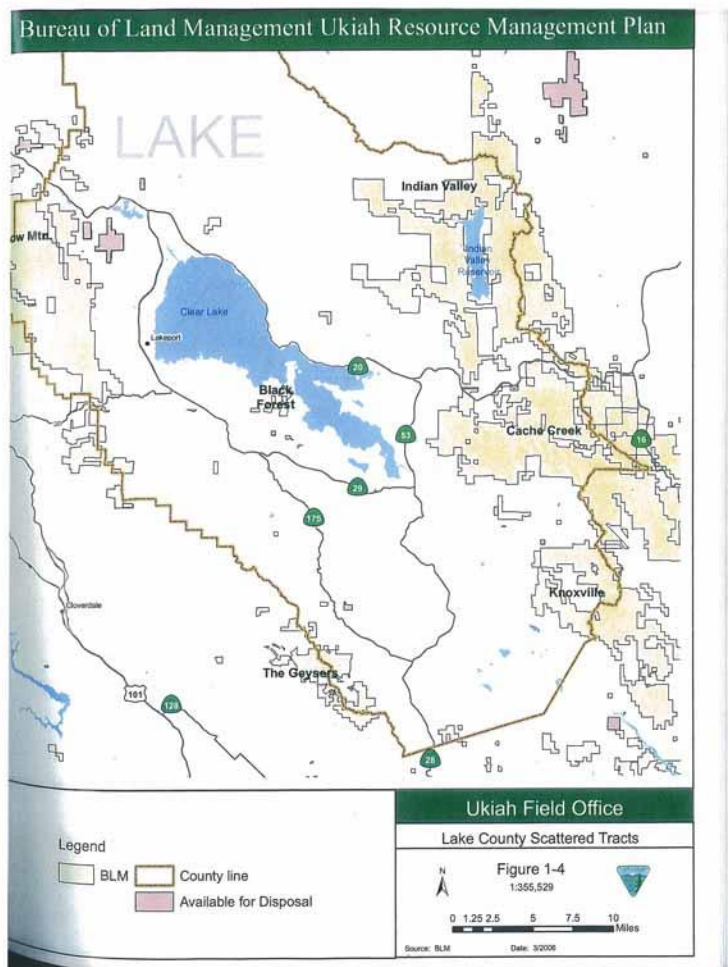
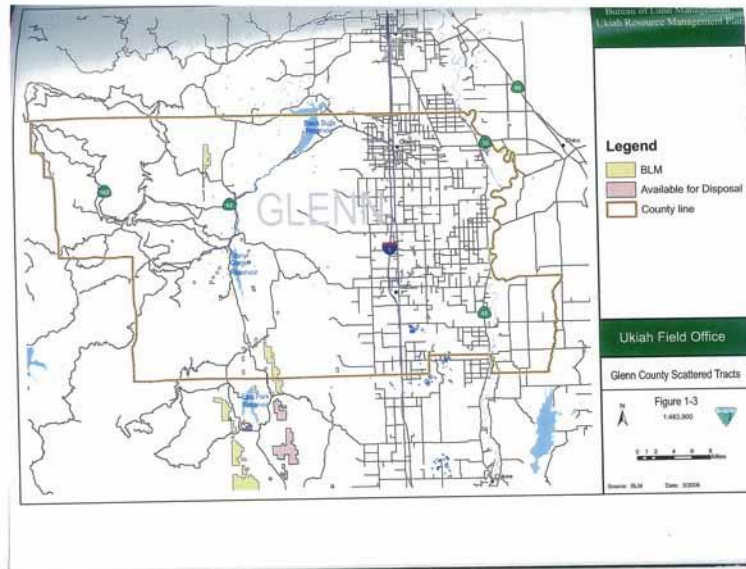
Steve Anderson summarized Redding land tenure changes. Highlights:

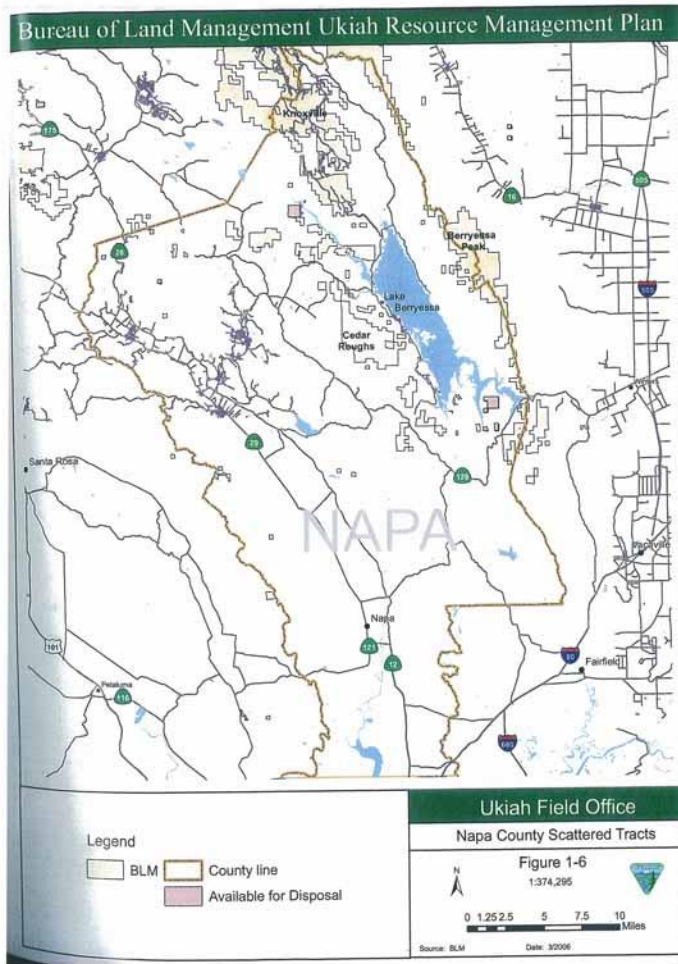
- The field office acquired 80 acres in the Chappie-Shasta Off Highway Vehicle Recreation Area using proceeds from the Land and Water Conservation Fund.
- 1,150 acres at the OHV area was transferred from the Forest Service to the BLM through legislation, making the BLM the sole manager at Chappie-Shasta.
- Acquisitions are continuing in the Sacramento River Bend. Most recently a series of small parcels were acquired for public ownership.
- There has been significant cleanup on these acquired parcels.
- The field office is completing purchase of the 450-acre Gover Ranch in the Bend. Purchase price is about \$1.17 million.

Ukiah

Rich Burns updated the RAC on the status of lands targeted for disposal from public ownership and those identified for acquisition, using a series of maps:







Redding Trails Update

Redding Field Office Outdoor Recreation Planner Bill Kuntz updated the group on the continuing expansion of recreation trails in the Redding area. Work has been completed by the field office and its partners in Shasta County. Highlights:

- Most work is concentrated in the Keswick Reservoir Area of west Redding.
- A complete loop between Redding and Shasta Dam is now completed on the east and west sides of the Sacramento River.
- Partners including the McConnell Foundation, City of Redding and the Redding Foundation are now looking at future opportunities in the Clear Creek Greenway on lands between the Sacramento River and Whiskeytown National Recreation Area's trail system. One connector trail is already in use between the Swasey Recreation Area and Whiskeytown.
- With completion of these projects the field office and its partners will have completed more than 150 miles of new trails in the past several years.

- Steve Anderson noted that the trail expansion is benefitting Redding's economy (bike shops are doing very well), and healthy lifestyles, and have even helped attract new businesses that appreciate the healthy lifestyle opportunities for their workers.

Bob Warren noted that the Shasta Cascade Wonderland Association, a tourism promotion organization, is producing a new brochure and smart phone app highlighting Redding trail opportunities.

Ryan was enthusiastic about Redding's contributions to the trail network.

OHV Grants

BLM's Northwest California field offices annually request grant funds from the state of California Division of Off Highway Vehicle Recreation. A summary of this year's requests:

- **Redding:** The field office is requesting \$430,000 (\$72,000 for Motion Creek bridge planning, \$57,000 for law enforcement, \$153,000 for operating sites, and \$148,000 for land acquisitions.
- **Arcata:** Lynda Roush noted that her office requested \$57,000 for the Samoa Dunes Recreation Area. The site is managed primarily for OHV use, but attracts other users including surfers and birders.
- **Ukiah:** Rich Burns summarized management at South Cow Mountain and Knoxville. For 2011 the office requested \$58,000 for law enforcement needs. The office is seeking \$190,000 for operations at both sites.

Eric Lueder noted that the state OHV budget is \$85 million year, with \$27 million reserved for grants. State budget cuts have reduced the division's operating budget and cut \$5 million from the grant program. The OHV Commission is now reviewing grant applications. He commended BLM for actively seeking grants.

Eric noted there has been a huge increase in demand for OHV recreation opportunities, but a decrease in available riding areas. He said if state-managed riding areas close, a possibility in an "all cuts" state budget reduction scenario, BLM and the Forest Service will see large user increases on their areas. He said there would be big increases in private land trespass.

Field Managers Reports

Ukiah Field Office

Rich Burns presented the report:

Fire and Fuel Projects –The Berryessa Estates Fuel Reduction project was completed. With the help of CDC hosted workers, we have expanded the Black Forest Fuel Break project. In cooperation with CalFire, we have started the Mill Creek Vegetative Management Plan covering approximately 1374 acres of Public Lands on North Cow Mountain.

OHV Grant Funding – The Ukiah Field Office applied for 2011-2012 OHV grants to assist with the management of the Cow Mountain and Knoxville areas. We requested approximately \$58,000 for law enforcement (patrol, dispatch services, sheriff contracts) activities and \$190,000

in operations and maintenance (campground maintenance, toilet pumping services, vandalism repair, signage, trail maintenance etc.). We appreciate the out-pouring of support regarding our OHV grant proposals.

Knoxville – The land exchange with Homestake Mining Corporation is still ongoing. Storm events have washed out the crossing, but not the bridge at Hunting Creek. We continue to owe a huge “thank you” to the Napa County Sheriff’s department for their continued support at Knoxville. Yolo County Road 40 access is still an issue.

Cow Mountain – Work continues on the Cow Mountain Recreation Management Plan. A successful Special Recreation Permit motorcycle event was held on Cow Mountain this past March. For 2010, the number of illegal marijuana cultivation sites at Cow Mountain was huge with over 250,000 plants confiscated. The cleanup of illegal garden sites has started.

Black Forest –Work is underway by Lake County in developing a management plan for Mount Konocti. The Agency is in the process of completing an acquisition of an additional 400 acres using money from a consolidated land exchange.

Indian Valley/Walker Ridge – Planning work continues on the proposed Walker Ridge Wind Energy Project. We are currently into the development of a draft EIS with a possible release date in July 2011. There has been no scheduled restoration work started for Baldy Peak though work is scheduled to begin soon. BLM received a petition from the California Native Plant Society to nominate approximately 30 square miles of Walker Ridge as an ACEC. BLM is in the process of review and consideration of the proposal. BLM is trying to get a handle on the illegal OHV activities and vandalism occurring on Walker Ridge. However, Barrel Springs campground was seriously vandalized last March. Serious habitat degradation caused by illegal OHV use was occurring in a meadow area adjacent to the Spring Valley subdivision referred to as Quail Trail. BLM has held two public meetings to address the issue and has now closed a road built in trespass which contributed to the situation. At least 175,000 illegal marijuana plants were confiscated from Walker Ridge. The cleanup of illegal garden sites on Walker Ridge has started.

BLM is ending the design phase of the Petray-Rathburn mercury mine cleanup and abatement action and starting the construction phase for the project.

Stornetta Ranch – Trust for Public Lands are working in partnership with California Department of Fish and Game and the City of Point Area to acquire the 600 acre coastal Cypress Abby/Atwood property acquisition. We are hoping the project is approved for LWCF funding in 2013. Congressman Mike Thompson is to sponsor new legislation to designate the Stornetta Public Lands as an “Outstanding Natural Area”.

California Coastal National Monument – With the opening of abalone season, the Field Office is stepping up its oversight of the marine life protected areas off the coast of the Stornetta Public Lands.

Cache Creek Natural Area (CCNA) – The Field Office and the Bear Creek Stakeholders Group are working together on reestablishing native plant populations, controlling of noxious

weeds, and rehabilitating damaged riparian areas on the Bear Creek portion of the Cache Creek Natural Area. BLM has received emails, letters, and phone calls from the public expressing their concerns over the grazing strategy currently being used to control thistle, medusahead and star-thistle. In response to these concerns, we are going to look into the development of a plan of operations/operations strategy when using livestock for weed control. Plan development will be accomplished in concert with the Bear Creek Stakeholders Group. A future meeting to start off the process is being scheduled.

Yolo County has closed the low-water crossing over Cache Creek along Highway 16 with no proposed future opening. The County is still in the process of abandoning the road to the local landowners. The Field Office is developing an MOU with Yolo County to mutually provide for improved recreational opportunities, and better public access to public lands.

During the month of May, the Ukiah Field Office will be providing oversight and participation with the Cache Creek Dash Equestrian Endurance event and Cache Creek Discovery Days.

Berryessa - BLM has completed the cultural clearances on the public easement to BLM lands on Berryessa Peak. The remaining NEPA document is to be completed later this year. Through the access acquired by Tuleyome, Yolo County Hikers, and Napa County Parks and Recreation, approximately 8000 acres of BLM managed lands will be accessible to the public. The Ukiah Field office will assist with boundary identification, signage, and trail development. Work will begin this summer (or as soon as we get our GPS unit out of repair) on surveying the Monticello Dam Trail easement on Berryessa Peak.

Cedar Roughs Wilderness – BLM is working with the Land Trust of Napa County on acquisition of the in-holding within the Cedar Roughs Wilderness.

Scattered Tracts/Split Estate –The scattered tract parcels, under contract for disposal since 1997, are slated to be used for the Mount Konocti acquisition. A feasibility report has been sent to the Washington Office for review and concurrence.

Geysers – The Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the expansion of Bottle Rock Power to a proposed 55 Mw geothermal project was signed by Lake County in December of 2010. BLM signed the associated Environmental Assessment analyzing the drilling operation on March 15, 2011. Bottle Rock is in the process of constructing their new two new well pads. Prior to plant operation, BLM will be required to develop two additional EAs, one to address the drilling technique and another to cover horizontal drilling from the Francisco Pad to the geothermal resource. Calpine recently installed two new injection wells.

Element Power has been authorized a right-of-way to study wind resources on public lands where NCPA has its geothermal operation. Element Power installed one Sodar anemometer and will be testing wind potential over the next three years.

Operation Full Court Press – The BLM will unite with multiple law enforcement jurisdictions and the California National Guard to focus on marijuana garden eradication, investigation, and reclamation on public lands managed within the Mendocino National Forest and Ukiah, Redding, and Arcata Field Offices. Areas within the Ukiah Field Office as a part of the operation include

North Cow Mountain Recreation Area, Walker Ridge, Indian Valley, and scattered tracts of public lands adjacent to the national Forest. This will be the first year of a three year operation with new areas being included each year. Over 600,000 marijuana plants were seized from the Ukiah public lands in 2010.

Land Tenure – According to the Ukiah RMP, “Retain all lands except where lands could be exchanged for lands that have greater management efficiency, to gain public values, or to serve important public purposes. This does not apply to Wilderness Areas, Wilderness Study Areas, Stornetta Public Lands, Cache Creek, and ACECs.” “Identify parcels depicted for potential disposal (approximately 10,365 acres) subject to site specific assessment.” BLM is working with County Governments to identify scattered isolated parcels of land which would be of importance to the counties, or should be disposed. Parcels identified Include Berryessa Estates, Quail Ridge, Homestake Mining Corporation and Morgan Valley. Lands BLM has acquired since the RMP include Montgomery Woods and lands within the Cache Creek Natural Area. Willing seller Lands to be acquired (working on presently) include: Raiche/McCory Property (Cedars of Sonoma ACEC), Cypress Abbey (Stornetta), Blue Lakes Ranch (North Cow Mountain) Rickabaugh Glades (South Cow Mountain), Wilderness In-holding (Cedar Roughs) Wilderness in-holdings (Cache Creek), Homestake parcels (Knoxville), and the Assembled Land exchange 18 scattered parcels for portions of the top of Mount Konocti.

In addition to his written report Rich burns said rangers will be checking vehicles heading into the back country if they are carrying materials commonly used for marijuana growing. Public land night patrols have increased.

Redding Field Office

Steve Anderson presented the report:

Lands program: We continue to work on land acquisitions using Land & Water Conservation Funds. At press time we are hopeful to close on a 475 acre portion of “Bloody Island” in the Sacramento River Bend Recreation Area (SRBRA). This property represents a \$1 million investment.

We also completed a purchase of 9 acres with an investment of \$380 thousand with river frontage in the SRBRA which needed extensive clean up. This land was part of what some of you will remember was called the “private triangle”. We are 11 acres in two parcels away from owning and managing the area. Restoration efforts have transformed this area into the likeness of the other lands within the SRBRA.

H.R. 1237 was introduced by Representative Herger which would provide a land exchange between the Forest Service and Trinity County Public Utility District as part of the exchange BLM would acquire 47 acres along the Trinity River. The parcel is adjoined by existing BLM land.

Because the RFO still has hundreds of disconnected lands we continue to work on hundreds of right-of-ways from renewals, re-assignment to new owners, some new requests, and considerable billing questions from Butte County. In Butte County some of the annual rental rates have gone up several hundred percent.

Resources: The resources staff is very busy with restoration, mitigation, monitoring, and clearance related work. As examples, our Forestry staff is working on several forest health projects that will produce about 1.5 million board feet of product. In addition there will be biomass/cogeneration products and firewood sales. Another example is extensive cultural clearance work for the area and length of new trails.

We've taken an aggressive approach to weeds management and assertive efforts to reestablish native plants in several areas with the Lower Clear Creek and the SRBRA being two focus area.

Finally, our biologist has been working closely with Fish and Game and great success with bass establishment and good age classes reported in the Osprey Pond (SRBRA). Some of this success has to do with a fencing project and removal of livestock grazing (new grazing plan implemented in late 2009 and 2010) of the 6 acre pond. *Update: Red ear sunfish and bass were stocked in Coyote pond on Friday, April 22, 2011.*

Recreation: At the risk of repeating some news, we feel it is important to discuss ARRA projects along with others. ARRA funds greatly enhanced visitor use/attractions/facilities. The paving of the National Sacramento River Rail Trail and the Middle Creek Trail were completed with ARRA funds. On the ground this means that there is a smooth surface trail (class 1) from Shasta Dam to Dana Drive (Sears store at the mall) or from the town of Old Shasta linked to the same destinations listed above.

Other ARRA recreation projects included:

- Repaving of roads in 3 campgrounds
- Paving the Bend Ferry Road (center of SRBRA)
- Pipeline construction for water delivery to new "Coyote Pond" along with fishing pier. New parking area, trail, and restrooms to be finished this summer.
- Repair to spillway on pond in the Weaverville area.



Figure 1 Grand opening of paved trail

We also designed and fabricated 3 new banners to be used for outreach/interpretation. Banners highlight Redding Front Country Trails, Sacramento River Parkway, and Chappie-Shasta OHV area.

.Figure 2 Visitor to American Trails booth reviews new banners



Recreation continued:

There are now 130 miles of trails in the greater Redding area many of which have been constructed in the last 5 years on BLM land.

Non-motorized trails update will be given by Bill Kuntz (see agenda). Bill was also presented with an award from Healthy Shasta as an Action Hero for his work on trails.



OHV info update:

1. Spath acquisition on East Fork Road at SO for review, should close next week, 80 acres in the OHV Area.
2. Acquired mini-excavator in Feb. 2011 for trail work, very handy, used for many other purposes \$40K of OHV funds used.
3. Multi-use grader on order, for road and trail work, smaller unit so it can be used on small construction jobs and projects, \$170K from OHV funds.
4. Redding Field Office personnel assisting in road and trail maintenance in March/April, at Fort Sage OHV, Eagle Lake FO, (SWECO) work.
5. BLM acquired 11,750 acres as part of legislative exchange -, campground and staging area at Shasta Dam, Transition from USFS to BLM very smooth.
6. Numerous OHV events FY11, such as Poker Runs, Grand Prix etc (4 total)...
7. Bypass Road (about 1/2 mile) construction to begin in May 2011, to eliminate OHV use on Sacramento River Rail Trail, Shasta RCD as partner adding \$10K for road construction from Stewardship Program funding.
4. 2011 OHV Grant Request: OHV grant for 2011-12

Acquisition	\$148,000
Ground Ops	\$153,000
Law Enforce	\$57,000
Motion Cr. Bridge Planning	<u>\$72,000</u>

Grant Request Total \$430,000

Other activities associated with other grants include construction of an interpretive display shelter adjacent to the Salmon Viewing Observation Deck along Lower Clear Creek, new signs installed along an 8 mile stretch of Lower Clear Creek. Parking area at Cloverdale Trailhead (Lower Clear Creek divide/gorge area) has been completed.

Fire and Fuels: We have had a very active winter with pile burning associated with Wildland Urban Interface, forest health, trails, and fuel break maintenance.

Tours, Presentations, etc.: We are working with Shasta Cascade Wonderland Organization on a variety of projects from brochure development, to developing smart phone apps, to taking travel writers on trail tours. Sunset Magazine writer will take a tour next month. Presentations have been made to 4 County Board of Supervisors. Invitations to speak at Rotary, Bike Clubs and others are continual. A tour with Senator Feinstein's Director of Field Services, Gina Banks was completed.

Arcata Field Office

Lynda Roush presented the report:

Arcata Proper: The Arcata Field Office is currently working on a forest health project on 120 acres within the Mina Parcel. This area is located on the Trinity and Mendocino county line. We plan to advertise and offer this commercial thinning sale in spring 2011. There are 853 thousand board feet (MBF) of Douglas-fir timber within the project area.

Lost Coast Headlands Activity Plan: This plan will tier to the existing Arcata Field Office Resource Management Plan. This activity plan will include the newly acquired Centerville Naval Base lands and other BLM lands (e.g. Fleener and Guthrie Creeks) within the Lost Coast Headlands Area. Based on public input on the preliminary plan and environmental assessment, a final plan and decision record will be developed and completed by September 2011. The draft plan will be out for public review this summer.

Restoration work at the Mike Thompson South Spit Cooperative Management Area (South Spit) includes working with the California Youth Conservation Corp (CCC) removing European beachgrass to restore native dune habitat. Utilized heavy equipment, to remove European beachgrass within the Habitat Restoration Area (HRA) (24 acres) and a portion of the Foregone Restoration Area (12 acres) on the north end of South Spit. Spread oyster shells on portions of the HRA area to improve habitat (i.e., providing cover) for the western snowy plover. Through the BLM Youth Initiatives program, specifically the Student Temporary Employment Program hiring five college students for summer seasonal work. These students will work in the

fields of recreation, wildlife, interpretation, engineering and youth leadership. Assisting in the field of botany and weeds management we have also hired a Chicago Botanical Intern. Supporting America's Great Outdoor program through interpretive field trips for children in Headwaters Forest Reserve, King Range National Conservation Area and throughout the Arcata Field Office Area.

Arcata received \$435,000 in deferred maintenance funds to upgrade and refresh a picnic and environmental education site in the community of Willits, CA. The project is being engineered to replace culverts, a small parking area and trail. The contract will hopefully be awarded this fiscal year.

King Range National Conservation Area: King Range Wilderness Management Plan has been a major focus this past winter. The Plan's primary emphasis is managing recreation use to minimize impacts to wilderness character: documents increasing use by public and SRPs, proposes permit and allocation system to manage use to maintain opportunities for solitude, establishes adaptive management to evaluate and fine-tune management; specifies actions to improve naturalness in coastal prairies, fire management focusing on maintaining fuel break system and equipment exclusion zone. Interagency wilderness monitoring protocol is being implemented and first round of data collection and collation will be complete this year, subsequent monitoring will occur in 5 year intervals.

CCCs will begin 8 weeks of donated crew time for hand built construction on phase III of Paradise Royale on May 11, valued at \$224,000.

Very full Environmental Education and Interpretation program: Work with HSU classes developing project office interpretive displays, fire ecology curriculum; partnering with Lost Coast Interpretive Association to develop Junior Interpreter program, Lost Coast Educational Center in restored King Range barns, curriculum development, planning 16 Hike/MTB Bike/Take It Outside programs with Youth Alive! in Southern Humboldt, recruiting; interviewing, and hiring 12 Nick's Interns for the 8th year of the program; delivered six Winter Lectures at Healy Senior Center, planning eight summer guided hikes.

Headwaters Forest Reserve: Under the theme of America's Great Outdoors the Headwaters Backcountry Ranger secured "Take it Outside" youth funding to bring children outdoors. So BLM along with California State Parks (CSP) co-lead a campaign with five other agencies to get Humboldt County kids reconnected to the great outdoors. This effort, known as "Outdoors Cool!" was kicked off Friday April 22, Earth Day 2011. The Outdoors Cool campaign includes eight 30-second Public Service Announcements (PSA) featuring local kids recreating in the great outdoors. The PSA's will be shown during children's TV programming through the summer and fall. In addition to the PSA's, a website called www.outdoorscool.com has been developed that features a map of Humboldt County with links to over fifty outdoor recreation "hot spots" on the North Coast. The website also suggests recreational opportunities, gives maps and directions, a calendar of upcoming outdoor events, and offers viewers a chance to see each of the 30-second PSA's.

Headwaters Education Center: The indoor interpretative panels and benches have been completed for the train barn (Headwaters Education Center (HEC)) and turned out exceptionally

well! Resource programs are now being developed around the theme of each panel for environmental/educational school programs. In addition, a volunteer's group is in formation and we are working toward training volunteers who will keep the HEC open on some weekend schedule, that is still be finalized.

Restoration work will continue this summer with a continued focus on road restoration. In addition, we are working with Humboldt State University to establish a water quality monitoring station on South Fork Elk River.

California Coastal National Monument: The Trinidad Gateway Committee received a grant from the National Conservation Foundation to develop a strategic plan that provides the group with general direction on potential projects to accomplish within the next 3 years. It was exciting process and brought the group together to think about projects that they would like to see accomplished now as well as into the future to benefit both the Monument as well as lands in the Trinidad vicinity. We are now beginning to implement some of those projects!

Additional Business

1. *Action: Michael suggested that the RAC provide letters of commendation for Steve and Bill and Lynda and Gary for their work on trails. The committee agreed. Jeff will assist Michael with writing.*
2. *Action: The RAC approved the following letter of commendation for Jan Bedrosian, recently retired deputy state director for external affairs in the California State Office:*

Dear Jan,

Members of the Northwest California Resource Advisory Council are unanimously enthusiastic in offering our congratulations to you as you retire from an extraordinary career in public service.

Over your 38 years in Bureau of Land Management public affairs you set and achieved high standards for transparency, professionalism and extra effort to assist members of the public in understanding the agency and participating in its decision making.

As a liaison between the BLM and members of Congress you continually provided accurate, timely and high quality information vital to legislation affecting our public lands and natural resources. Your legacy in public service to our Nation will live on in these accomplishments.

On many occasions our council and the BLM staff supporting us benefitted from your advice and guidance. You played a direct role in helping our RAC become an effective voice in the BLM's decision-making processes.

Your retirement will be a great loss for the BLM, for the public and for us, but your rest from the daily demands in agency public affairs is well deserved.

Again, we thank you and wish you all the best in your future endeavors.

Closing Business

Next Meeting: The meeting at the Ukiah Field Office will focus entirely on RAC comments on the Walker Ridge DEIS. Primary date: August 11-12, beginning at noon the first day and ending at noon on the second day. There will be no field trip. The alternate date, to be used if the DEIS release date is delayed, is Sept. 7-8.

*Summary minutes compiled by
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